

Process for disposition of recalled ground beef from Hallmark/Westland Meat Company in South Dakota

Reminder: This recall is only for ground beef from the Hallmark/Westland Meat Company. All commodity ground beef is under commodity code A608. Some of it is from Westland and some is from other companies. Cases and packages are clearly marked with the company name. Be sure that which is disposed of is only from Westland Meat Company.

Review of the ground beef hold and recall

- On Thursday, January 31, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) placed a hold on ground beef from Hallmark/Westland Meat Company. South Dakota Department of Education's Child and Adult Nutrition Services (CANS) notified school food authorities (SFAs) that same day.
- On Sunday, February 17, the USDA announced that Hallmark/Westland Meat Company voluntarily recalled 143 million pounds of ground beef that originated at the Hallmark/Westland Meat Company plant.
- On Monday, February 18, the CANS office notified school food authorities that the beef, which had previously been on administrative hold, was recalled.
- The recalled meat must be disposed of by March 28 following these procedures. School food authorities will be reimbursed for costs incurred in destruction of the product following the instructions.

What do we do with the beef now?

- School food authorities with less than one case (40 pounds) on site may destroy it on site. Instructions for destruction follow. The state will contact these agencies to determine if they want to have it picked up or if they want to destroy it themselves. If the boxes the beef came in have been destroyed, please put it in other boxes and clearly label it as "Westland Beef – to be destroyed" to assist in the pick-up and packing of the beef in the truck. Complete the destruction verification form and submit to Child and Adult Nutrition Services.
- School food authorities with product that was cooked to use, but then pulled because of the hold, may destroy it on site. Since this quantity is unknown, these agencies may contact the state by February 26 to have the product picked up if they cannot destroy it on site. Complete the destruction verification form and submit to Child and Adult Nutrition Services.
- School food authorities with more than one case (40 pounds) will have that picked up by Dizco. If the boxes the beef came in have been destroyed, please put it in other boxes and clearly label it as "Westland Beef – to be destroyed" to assist in the pick-up and packing of the beef

in the truck. If it is at a location other than the normal delivery site, please advise Child and Adult Nutrition Services by Tuesday, February 26. Complete the destruction verification form and submit to Child and Adult Nutrition Services.

When will the beef be picked up?

The state will arrange with Dizco, our contractor for transport, to pick up the product. The schedule for the pick-up will be sent to the schools once the arrangements are finalized. This will be separate from the commodity delivery to avoid any concerns about mixing up the food as well as convenience of the delivery person.

How do we destroy the product on site?

Product to be destroyed on site must be witnessed by two people. We recommend this be a person from the food service and an administrator. There is, of course, paperwork to be completed describing how much was destroyed, how it was destroyed, who witnessed this, and costs that will be claimed for this accompanied by original receipts. Keep a copy of the report and a copy of the receipts at the school. Submit the report and the original receipts to Child and Adult Nutrition Services to receive reimbursement.

There are several options to destroy the product by March 28. NOTE: The product cannot be used for or made into pet food or food for any other animals.

1. Run the product down the garbage disposal. This will work if there is only a small quantity. If you must thaw the product before running it through the garbage disposal, be sure to follow the proper procedures for handling meat - thaw on the lowest shelf or on a separate cart so that juices from the thawing product do not drip on other product.
2. Take it to a landfill to be buried or incinerated.
3. Ruin or “denature” the product. Put the beef in a container, such as a plastic bucket or box; put the container in double-bagged plastic bags, ruin the product, and finally, put it in the dumpster to be picked up same day. Here are some suggestions to denature the product:
 - a. Mix bleach and food coloring (blue or green would be the most noticeable). No chemical reaction will occur between the food coloring and the bleach. Full-strength bleach can cause burns or ruin clothes so use it with care. Pour the bleach/food coloring mix over the beef.
 - b. Break apart charcoal briquettes and rub it on the beef. Gravel or sand could also be used but that will not stick to the product as

well.

- c. Other chemicals can be purchased from your supplier to denature the product.

When will the product be picked up?

CANS will work with the contracted transport company to determine the best route for picking up the recalled Westland Beef in late February and March. That schedule will be sent to the school food authorities when it is determined.

What if we have to buy supplies to destroy the product?

School food authorities that have expenses for destruction of product (chemical, charcoal, etc.) will be reimbursed for those costs from the U.S. Department of Agriculture through the state, if you report it to CANS and send the original receipt. The state combines all of the expenses and submits that to USDA. USDA reimburses the state and the state sends it on to the schools. Complete the Destruction Verification form and submit to Child and Adult Nutrition Services with any receipts. The state will be reimbursed for the expenses of picking up the product and taking it to the landfill.

Will we be reimbursed for the actual product? What if I had to buy beef because of the hold and recall.?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture does not reimburse for the product that is destroyed nor for product that was purchased to use in its place. USDA is actively working to provide alternate product.

In summary

- School food authorities with less than one case of beef (40 pounds) are asked to destroy it on site by March 28 or contact CANS.
- School food authorities with product that had been cooked and then held upon notification of the recall are asked to destroy it on site by March 28.
- The state will pick up product in quantities of one or more cases. School food authorities with less than one case may notify CANS if they would like to have the product picked up.
- School food authorities will be notified of the schedule for pick-up.
- The state will be responsible for destruction of the meat that is picked up.

For more information about the recall, visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture's website at www.usda.gov.

South Dakota school food authorities with questions about this recall should contact Child and Adult Nutrition Services at (605) 773-3413. This Information will also be posted on the Child and Adult Nutrition Services website: <http://doe.sd.gov/oess/cans/>.